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The praise of Nothing:

Though some doe wonder why I write in praise
Of Nothing, in these lamentable daies,
When they have read, and will my counsell take,
I hope of Nothing something they may make.

To the tune of, Though I have but a marke a yeare, &c.

THe praise of wisedome some doe write,
and some the praise of money:
And every one like Bees to th' hive,
from something gather hony.
But if my Genius doe not faile,
To prompt me ere I end my tale,
You shall finde that nothing will prevaile,
for all must turne to nothing.

Nothing was first, and shall be last,
for nothing was for ever,
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Nothing is swifter then the winde,
or lighter then a feather,
Yet I another thing have found,
which quite excelleth either:
A harlots love, that every day,
Is chang'd and swiftly blowne away,
But what's more light then her, I pray,
the wiseman answeres nothing.

Nothing shall therefore please me more,
than women to abandon,
For if that I should fall in love,
or joyne with such a wanton:
Shee'd breake my very heart-strings sure,
Or I must Vulcans lot indure,
And patiently abide the cure,
or else be help'd by nothing.

Take you heed then unmarried Lads,
before you grow a lover,
And ere too soone you chuse a wife,
with honest patience prove her:
For nothing can againe unwed,
Nor cure a Cuckolds aking head,
Besides once lost a Maiden-head,
can be recal'd by nothing.

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The ſecond part, To the ſame tune.

IN heat of war nothing is ſafe,
in peace nothing reſpected,
But ill got wealth, which to procure,
no vice at all's neglected:
The ſonne doth wiſh his fathers end,
That he may have his wealth to ſpend,
But let ſuch Lads their manners mend,
or all will come to nothing.

Nothing is ſafe by Sea or Land,
nor alwaies free from danger,
Which is committed to the truſt,
of either friend or ſtranger.
For nothing in the world remaines
But for their private ends or gaines,
Their hav't although they breake their brains
or bring themſelves to nothing.

Nothing regard [illegible] then gold,
but vertue's quite decayd,
For gold the Uſurer ſels his ſoule,
which muſt at laſt be paid,
When nothing from the grave can call
Such mizers who their ſoules inthrall,
To gripe and hoord the Devill and all,
but better they had nothing.

Nothing can from the ſight of God,
conceale the faults of any,
For his cleare eye can ſearch into,
the ſmalleſt chinke or cranny.
He can within thy heart eſpy,
Thy ſecreteſt ſinnes which there doe lye,
But if you to repentance hie,
they ſhall appeare as nothing.

Nothing therefore hereafter ſeeke
but vertue, vice deteſting,
With pureſt robs of ſanctity,
your humble ſoule inveſting:
And ſeeke you after no ſuch thing,
Which may your ſoule to ſorrow bring.
Or while thou liv'ſt thy conſcience ſting,
or elſe deſire nothing.

For though but little thou art worth,
yet nothing doſt deſire,
Nor coveteſt thy neighbours goods,
nor above thy ſelfe aſpire.
But reſteſt honeſtly content,
With that poore little God hath ſent,
Thou mayſt diſperſe in merriment,
[illegible]

When earth-wormes ſpend
and here can reſt in quiet.
Nor with the feare to loſe their gold,
have time to ſleepe or dyet:
But with a ſad and penſive minde
Still ſtudying how the poore to grinde,
Untill at laſt with ſorrow pinde,
themſelves are turn'd to nothing.

And thus you now have heard the praiſe,
of nothing worth a penny:
Which as I cand to ſing heare now,
I hope will yeld me many.
But if that price be held to deare,
Or any diſlike this counſell here,
He may depart with a flea in's eare,
for I will give him nothing.

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